

MASSACHUSETTS RARE AND ENDANGERED PLANTS

PONDSHORE KNOTWEED

(Polygonum puritanorum Fern.)

DESCRIPTION

Pondshore Knotweed is a low growing annual with prostrate to ascending stems branched near the base, 8-23" (2-6dm.) long. Its lanceolate leaves, 1.2-4.0" (3-10cm.) long and up to 0.6" (1.5cm.) wide, are broadest at middle and taper to both ends. Leaves are mostly green above and reddened as the season progresses. Achenes (small fruits which do not open at maturity) are black, smooth, and shiny. Flowers are pink, on an elongate unbranched axis, and borne on the sides of the stem. It flowers and fruits from mid-July to early October.

SIMILAR SPECIES IN MASSACHUSETTS

Lady's Thumb (Polygonum persicaria) closely resembles Pondshore Knotweed but has a dark blotch on each leaf, is larger, and usually stands erect. Its leaves are relatively longer and more slender; the achenes are larger.

HABITAT IN MASSACHUSETTS

Pondshore Knotweed is found in dense to semi-dense, linear colonies along the sandy, peaty, or pebbly shores of coastal plain ponds. It usually does not appear until the water level drops dramatically. Species found in association with Pondshore Knotweed include Stachys hyssopifolia (Hyssop Hedge Nettle) and Agrostis scabra (Tickle-grass).

RANGE

Pondshore Knotweed is regionally endemic and ranges from western Nova Scotia and southwestern Maine to southeastern Massachusetts and southern Rhode Island.

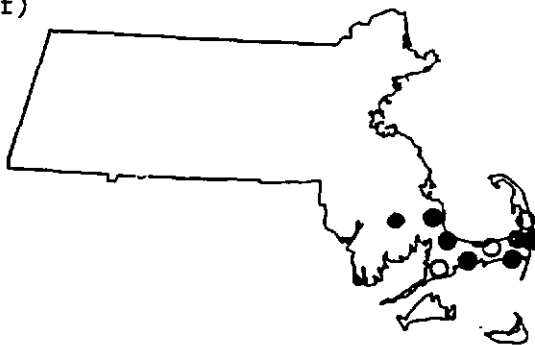
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Britton, N.L. and R.A. Brown. An Illustrated Flora of the Northern United States and Canada. Dover Publications, Inc. 1970 reprint of 1913 ed.



Distribution of Pondshore Knotweed



● Verified since 1978
○ Reported prior to 1978

Distribution in Massachusetts by Town

PONDSHORE KNOTWEED (continued)

POPULATION STATUS

Pondshore Knotweed is considered a species of "Special Concern" in Massachusetts. Currently, 1978 to present, 10 occurrences have been verified; historically 4 other occurrences have been reported. This species is rare because of its limited range; also, development and heavy recreational use around coastal plain ponds have adversely impacted the habitat for this species.